

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Truck Movements from North Vietnam During the Bombing Pause

1. Between 27 December 1965 and 31 January 1966, the level of truck traffic moving south on Laotian infiltration routes between North and South Vietnam averaged 23 trucks per day--twice the average of 15 trucks per day moving south on these routes during the same period one year earlier.

A new and shorter infiltration road, Route 911, was completed in the fall of 1965, and has replaced Route 23 as the main road to South Vietnam.

(See Table A for day-to-day traffic on Route 911 and 23 during the bombing pause).

2. The observed increase has been made possible by (1) the greater movement of supplies into the border area of southern North Vietnam as a result of resumption of daytime activities during the bombing pause and, (2) by the extensive improvements to the Laotian road network which have been made in the past year. Truck traffic within Laos, however, continues to move principally at night.

3. During the whole of the last quarter of 1965, the flow of supplies into the southern provinces of North Vietnam showed a steadily rising rate, with increased employment of all available means of transportation--road, water, and, where possible, rail.

Resumption of daytime activity has undoubtedly increased the already high level of movement. A truck travelling from Hanoi to South Vietnam, for example, would require approximately 4 days for the trip, travelling day and night, as opposed to about 12 days if

it moved only at night. Moreover, resumption of daytime activity has permitted more rapid repair and improvement of transportation routes, further facilitating increased movement of supplies. For example, restoration of a railroad bridge at a former major transloading point, has enabled further southward movement of supplies on a section of the railroad south of Hanoi.

4. Since 24 December, more than 200 trucks have been photographed on roads in southern North Vietnam--most of them on Route 15, which leads to Mu Gia Pass and the Laotian road network. Previous photographic coverage of this area in 1965 prior to the bombing pause had revealed almost no truck traffic.

5. Improvements in the infiltration network within Laos over the past year have raised significantly the capacity of the Laotian transport system to absorb increased quantities of supplies from North Vietnam for movement into South Vietnam. During the past year alternate routes have been built or improved and bypasses--in some instances double bypasses--have been constructed at critical choke points. As a result of these improvements through truck traffic is now possible, in dry weather, from Mu Gia Pass to the Laotian border provinces adjacent to South Vietnam.

7. In addition, the foot trail around the end of the Demilitarized Zone--a known personnel infiltration route--has been improved with the addition of many narrow bridges over streams and hand rails along its steeper grades.

8. All available evidence indicates that, as a result of past preparations, in both North Vietnam and Laos, the North Vietnamese were able to take full advantage of the pause in bombing to increase the movement of supplies in support of operations in South Vietnam.

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CIA/ORR

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Trucks Observed Moving South in Laos
27 Dec 65 - 31 Jan 66

<u>Date</u>	<u>Route 23</u>	<u>Route 911</u>
27 Dec	0	0
28 Dec	0	115
29 Dec	0	25
30 Dec	0	57
31 Dec	0	0
1 Jan	0	59
2 Jan	19	65
3 Jan	0	67
4 Jan	0	-
5 Jan	0	-
6 Jan	0	-
7 Jan	0	-
8 Jan	5	-
9 Jan	15	38
10 Jan	0	0
11 Jan	0	34
12 Jan	0	21
13 Jan	0	13
14 Jan	0	5
15 Jan	0	0
16 Jan	0	0
17 Jan	7	33
18 Jan	0	18
19 Jan	0	27
20 Jan	0	19
21 Jan	0	0
22 Jan	27	0
23 Jan	53	0
24 Jan	0	0
25 Jan	0	0
26 Jan	12	0
27 Jan	0	0
28 Jan	4	47
29 Jan	18	29
30 Jan	0	-
31 Jan	0	-
Total	181	582
Number of days covered	36	29
Average number of trucks per day	5	24
Average per day	27 Dec 65 - 31 Jan 66	29
Average per day	27 Dec 64 - 31 Jan 65	15

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